

CHARISMATICS AND MARY

May 17, 2006 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article) -

The Charismatic movement is an ecumenical branch of the old Pentecostalism. It began in 1960 when “tongues speaking” broke out in St. Mark’s Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California. The priest, Dennis Bennett (1917-1991), supported the move and became a leader in promoting it in many other churches. Bennett was forced to resign from St. Mark’s and subsequently moved to St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Seattle, Washington. He has had a wide influence through his frequent travels and speaking engagements and his six best-selling books, including *Nine O’Clock in the Morning* and *The Holy Spirit and You*. It is claimed that Bennett has led more than 25,000 people into a charismatic experience.

The movement spread quickly among Episcopalians, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, and other Protestant denominations.

The Charismatic Movement was promoted to the hilt by the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship International (FGBMFI). This was founded in 1951 by Pentecostal Demos Shakarian; and by the 1960s it was a powerful force in promoting the charismatic experience and philosophy throughout the denominations. One of the chief goals of the FGBMFI is “to bring greater unity among all people in the body of Christ.” It did this by de-emphasizing doctrine and exalting religious experience.

The Charismatic movement penetrated **THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH** in the latter half of the 1960s.

In March 1967, nine Roman Catholics associated with Notre Dame University approached Ray Bullard and desired that he lay hands on them. They yearned for a Pentecostal style experience and had been unable to attain it on their own. Bullard was president of a chapter of the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship International (FGBMFI) in South Bend, Indiana, and was a deacon in Calvary Tabernacle in South Bend, a congregation affiliated with the Assemblies of God. Bullard and his Pentecostal friends transferred their Pentecostal experiences to the Roman Catholics by the laying on of hands during regular house fellowship gatherings.

By 1974, 30,000 attended the annual charismatic Catholic conference at Notre Dame.

In 1975, 10,000 charismatic Catholics traveled to Rome to hear Pope Paul VI welcome them to the Vatican.

It is important to understand that the Charismatic experience does not draw Catholics to the truth, but confirms their Catholic doctrine. After Roman Catholics began exhibiting charismatic phenomena at the house fellowships conducted by Ray Bullard, a Pentecostal ex-missionary asked them, "Now that you have received the Holy Spirit when are you thinking of leaving the Roman Catholic Church?" The astonished Roman Catholic charismatics replied, "But we have absolutely no intention of leaving the Church" (Fernand Legrand, *All about Speaking in Tongues*, p. 4).

Not only have the charismatic Roman Catholics remained in the Catholic Church, for the most part, but they have found a newfound love for Catholic dogmas. All of the following statements are by Roman Catholics:

"Unanimously, people [Roman Catholics who have had Charismatic experiences] report A GREATER APPRECIATION OF THE SACRAMENTS, especially the Mass as meaningful encounters with Christ, the Real Presence [in the Mass] and the role of Mary" (John V. McHale, *The Furrow*, May 1973).

"Anyone who has become a genuine Charismatic, to my knowledge, HAS BECOME A BETTER CATHOLIC" (Cardinal Manning of Los Angeles, quoted by Priest Finbarr Devine, *Charismatic Renewal for Catholics*, 1976, p. 48).

"As one reads the literature coming out of the renewal, it becomes obvious that those who write from within the renewal wish to be Catholic and WISH TO SITUATE THE RENEWAL WITHIN THE CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL TRADITION. This is an expression, one of many, of the fidelity of the renewal to the [Catholic] Church" (Ralph Martin, *The Spirit and the Church*, 1976, p. 147).

"What we were experiencing was very Catholic. In addition to all the new elements, WE WERE AWAKENED TO THE RICHNESS OF THE MASS, THE SACRAMENTS AND A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF THE PLACE OF MARY AND THE SAINTS" (Kevin Ranaghan, "Roman Catholics Find Charismatic Movement Is 'Very Catholic,'" *Charisma*, June 1982).

"Catholic charismatics are placing more emphasis on their church identity and heritage than ever before. Wherever I go ... CATHOLIC CHARISMATICS ARE REDISCOVERING THE MEANING OF TRADITIONAL CATHOLIC BELIEFS AND PRACTICES, including the sacraments, the Rosary, the Virgin Mary and the saints. ... FOR YEARS I'VE BEEN TELLING PENTECOSTALS THAT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH WAS DE-EMPHASIZING DEVOTION TO MARY. NOW I HEAR IT'S ALL COMING BACK, WITH THE CHARISMATICS LEADING THE WAY" (Nick Cavnar, "Why Are Catholic Charismatics Getting So Catholic?" *Charisma*, April 1985; Cavnar is executive editor of the Catholic publication *New Covenant*).

"There is, however, another option and this is the way that has been followed by the millions of happy Catholics who are active in charismatic renewal. They have experienced a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit in answer to expectant prayer, and they are content to refer to this as 'being baptized in the Holy Spirit.' ... Also, very strikingly, they HAVE FOUND THEMSELVES DRAWN MORE DEEPLY INTO THEIR CATHOLIC FAITH AND PRACTICE. The Mass and the sacraments have become more meaningful and fruitful. Quite simply, THEY HAVE BECOME MORE CATHOLIC (Derek Lance, "The Dilemma of Being a Catholic Charismatic," *Chariscenter USA Newsletter*, March-April 1990; Lance is a Catholic priest of Northampton, England).

"Since I have had this [charismatic] experience, MY ALLEGIANCE TO THE HOLY FATHER AS THE VICAR OF CHRIST IN THE WORLD HAS BEEN HEIGHTENED AND STRENGTHENED. My appreciation for Mary as the co-redemptress and mediatoress of my salvation has been assured. My appreciation of the Mass as the sacrifice of Christ has now been heightened" (Cardinal Joseph Suenens, "Charismatic Ecumenism: The Road to Rome," by Michael McCoskey).

The Full Gospel Business Men's Association published a booklet entitled *Roman Catholics and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit*. It contains testimonies of priests, nuns, and laity telling how they received the "baptism of the Holy Spirit." The result is that they attend Mass more regularly, ARE MORE DEVOTED CATHOLICS, and appreciate the liturgy [Roman Catholic rituals] more fully (*The Catholic Gospel*, Vol. 14, No. 1, p. 4).

Light of Life is India's most influential evangelical magazine. When the "renewed" Catholics were asked if their views of Mary had changed, they responded as follows: "Nothing has happened to the great Mother of God. SHE STILL REMAINS QUEEN OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, RESPECTED, LOVED AND VENERATED. But we have a deeper understanding of her position in regard to God and to us" (*Light of Life*, June 1979).

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It seems that the Roman Catholic is influencing the Charismatic movement more than the Charismatic movement is influencing Rome, and this is evident in the matter of Mary veneration.

In 1979, Tyndale House published Michael Harper's book *The Three Sisters*, which traced the growing ecumenical unity of three branches of Christianity--Evangelical Protestantism (*Evangeline*), Pentecostalism (*Charisma*), and Roman Catholicism (*Roma*). On page 49 Harper, an Anglican, exclaimed:

"Oh, what an enrichment it has been to meet with Catholics and to be introduced to some of the treasure stores of Catholic life! **The VIRGIN MARY HAS COME ALIVE and I feel I know her now**, in the same way as my Evangelical heritage helped to know St. Paul."

Former Pentecostal Fernand Legrand of France tells the sad story of Thomas Roberts, who prior to his ecumenical ventures was "a much-appreciated preacher of moderate Pentecostal tendencies."

"As years passed he became the spearhead of the French Charismatic movement. He carried the Pentecostal experience into Roman Catholic circles and there too he saw his 'second blessing' in operation with its signs. He worked untiringly to promote inter-church communion experiences between charismatic Protestants and Catholics, for the first during their commemoration of the Last Supper and for the latter, during their falsely-named eucharist. He devoted himself to this so much and so well that he diluted his evangelical identity. SEEING HIS SPIRITUAL CHILDREN MIRACULOUSLY PRAYING TO THE VIRGIN MARY IN TONGUES, HE COULD NOT OBJECT SINCE IT WAS THROUGH HIS MINISTRY AND THE LAYING ON OF HIS HANDS THAT THESE

CATHOLICS, who, be it noted, had not asked for a stone, or a snake or a scorpion, had nevertheless received this 'gift.' Having never questioned his own experience, he could not contest theirs without retracting his position. He was like a hen who has hatched duck eggs and who follows her ducklings as far as she can into the water. He was so thoroughly soaked that he ended up drowned. SINCE HIS SPIRITUAL OFFSPRING, INSPIRED BY THE SAME SPIRIT AS HE WAS, PRAYED TO THE VIRGIN, HE DID THE SAME" (*All about Speaking in Tongues*, Ryde, NSW, Australia: Bible Book and Tract Depot, 2001, p. 137).

The North American Congress on the Holy Spirit & World Evangelization in New Orleans, July 1987, brought together roughly 40,000 representatives of 40 denominations, including Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Lutheran, and Roman Catholic. There were many books for sale promoting the alleged Mary visitations at Medjugorje, Fatima, and Lourdes. The leaders of this ecumenical charismatic conference, Pentecostal Vinson Synan and Roman Catholic David Sklorenko, affirmed to the press that the books and other items for sale had been approved by the conference workers.

The late and very influential David DuPlessis, who was called "Mr. Pentecost," believed that Mary was appearing at Medjugorje in Yugoslavia. He is listed on page 135 of the book "Is the Virgin Mary Appearing at Medjugorje" (The Word Among Us Press, 1984) by Catholic priest Rene Laurentin, who was an advisor for the Vatican II Council.

A Catholic priest who spoke at Indianapolis '90, an ecumenical charismatic conference that I attended with press credentials, told how that Protestants have learned to love the Rosary through their relationships with Catholics in the anti-abortion crusade.

"Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. 15:33).

"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Gal. 5:9).

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